

of the Nile fifty miles or so north of Jinja, good sport may be had with barbel and other silvery fishes, both trolling with spoon and baiting float tackle with bread.

The best fishing, however, in this part of Uganda is on Lake Albert, at Butiaba. I could spare only two days, but I contrived, again trolling with a spoon to secure Nile perch—the ‘punda’ of the local natives, and the ‘baggara’ of the Sudanese¹—of 49 and 30½ lbs. and another very game fish, which I understand to be called ‘tiger fish,’ of 10 lbs. Of the last named, which has formidable teeth and the adipose fin more commonly associated with the *Salmonidae*, I caught nearly two-score pounders from the wharf on a salmon-fly. The ten-pounder leapt in the air several times like a trout, but the perch had another trick that vividly recalled the last moments of some of my Florida tarpon. This consisted in standing, as it were, upright on the tail, and opening its enormous mouth to its fullest gape in an effort to shake out the spoon.

I only knew the tarpon (and not even all of them) try this at the last ditch, when close to the boat, but the Nile perch does it immediately on being hooked, first running out fifty to eighty yards of line, and several times before coming to the gaff. My own visit to Lake Albert was too brief and too imperfectly organised to admit of much success, but I have great hopes that Sir Frederick Jackson, K.C.M.G., who followed a week later, will have secured some really worthy specimens.

TWO RARE EAST AFRICAN ANIMALS

By H. J. ALLEN TURNER

The last two months, October and November 1913, I have spent collecting natural history specimens along the southern edge and round the scattered areas of the Kakumega forest.

Perhaps the most remarkable of the little known animals

¹ These names, of which the first means donkey, and the second, cow, doubtless refer to the great bulk and somewhat clumsy build of the fish.

obtained is the potto (*Perodicticus Ibeanus*). The East African potto is represented in the British Museum by one specimen (the type), which was obtained by Mr. Robin Kemp from near Mumias and described by Mr. Oldfield Thomas in 1910; in the Smithsonian Institute the species is represented by four specimens collected by Mr. Edmond Heller some two years ago. This animal is extremely difficult to obtain owing to its nocturnal habits and the inaccessible forests it inhabits. It seems to lead a solitary life, as on no occasion did I find more than one in a tree, but obtained my specimens here and there, often miles apart.

Getting about and searching in these forests is very hard work, chiefly owing to the number of fallen trees, which in falling have opened up air spaces in which an almost impenetrable growth of a kind of nettle springs up. Here the heavy growths of wild vines reach down from the tree tops to the undergrowth. In these vine-covered trees round these openings I found most of the pottos. I do not think these animals ever leave the trees, a live specimen making poor progress over a flat surface. Their movements are very slow at all times, and if frightened they ascend a branch slowly or hide their heads between their fore limbs. They assume remarkable attitudes and appear to be broader than they are long. They rest with the hind quarters drawn up and the head tucked in between the fore legs. In this position the vertebræ behind the head present a series of spines which do not penetrate the skin; for, in skinning, a cavity, but no hole, is left in the skin which the sharp points of the vertebræ pull out of. I suppose they sleep with their heads towards the tree trunk.

I think the scent glands of this animal help to keep their would-be enemies away, for they are very objectionable.

The fur of the upper parts is dark grey near the skin and for three parts of its length tipped with pale brown showing a drab brown surface which is sprinkled all over with white-tipped hairs which increase in numbers towards the shoulders where they end abruptly, giving place to black-tipped hairs on the shoulders and head, forming a well-marked line in some specimens and less distinct in others—while a sprinkling of long hairs, which stand erect on the neck and head, give the

animal a grotesque appearance. The underparts are greyish white.

The young are born pure white, and one only at a birth. The food is also very remarkable, and it took me some time to find out what it was : all the stomachs of specimens obtained were examined and all contained the same semi-fluid substance like boiled tapioca with only tiny specks of insect remains and minute particles of some red-skinned fruit. I also found in one some particles of small bird's egg-shell, but more than 90 per cent. of the stomach contents in all cases was this sticky white jelly which I afterwards found to be gum.

My living specimen, which has been eight weeks in captivity, seems to be doing well on gum soaked in water with just a little banana and other fruit.

These animals have remarkable strength ; when they hold on to anything it is difficult to make them let go. Their hands are very human in shape, the thumbs are large, but the index finger is rudimentary and like the galagos. They have one claw on the first toe of hind foot.

The animal in captivity shows the most extraordinary strength of limb, being able to extend itself horizontally to full length while holding by its hind feet to an upright branch. In feeding it will as often as not hang head downwards, holding the fruit or other food in its paws.

In this same locality I shot several specimens of another rare animal, the large scaly-tailed flying squirrel. This remarkable animal is diurnal and amuses itself when nobody is about by gliding like an aeroplane across openings and old clearings in the forest. They are extremely timid, and when frightened lie flat on trunk or large branches of trees, with limbs and flying membrane extended, their colour making them invisible at even a short distance. The sharp scales on the tail must be for the purpose of holding them up after alighting from a flight. They seem always to alight on the well-exposed lower perpendicular part of a tree with legs extended, the scales on the tail giving them time to get a grip with their feet before falling.

It is extremely difficult to make them leave a tree in which they have taken refuge. I found it necessary to send a boy

up into the tree to dislodge them. Then they would make a flight of as far as 150 yards. Their food seems to be entirely of leaves, but they chew it so thoroughly that it is hard to tell.

THE CHEMOSIT

BY A. BLAYNEY PERCIVAL

Amongst the weird animals that have been reported from various parts of British East Africa is the chemosit or chimiset or Nandi bear. This animal was referred to by Mr. Hobley in his paper on 'Some Unidentified Beasts,' where he quoted Mr. Geoffrey Williams' account of it.

I have heard of it from several people who have resided in the neighbourhood of the Nandi forests, as well as from the local natives.

The stories vary to a very large extent, but the following points seem to agree. The animal is of fairly large size, it stands on its hind legs at times, is nocturnal, very fierce, kills man or animals.

In most stories the resemblance to a monkey of sorts is very noticeable, but the fact that the animal is nocturnal, a point on which all native accounts agree, at once makes this impossible.

There is only one account that I know of in which the animal has been killed, and that comes from the Maraquet district; it is said that at one time one of these animals was so bad that great preparations were made to kill it, and at last it was killed by a party of men who put a dummy man in the doorway of a hut and sat inside and waited till the animal came and tried to take the dummy; it was then shot with arrows. This is supposed to have happened fairly recently.

Personally, I am quite in the dark about the beast, and am still a bit doubtful about its existence as a new animal.

During my many years in Africa I have investigated so many stories of this sort and in the end found that the real